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New York

President:	Mr. Rugunda	(Uganda)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koudougou
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Japan	Mr. Sumi
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gouider
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Shcherbak
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo
	Viet Nam	Mr. Hoang Chi Trung

Agenda

The situation in Sierra Leone

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Sierra Leone

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Sierra Leone, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Davies (Sierra Leone) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the course of the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Justice Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and to Mr. Steven Rapp, Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Justice Renate Winter and Prosecutor Steven Rapp. I now give the floor to Justice Winter.

Ms. Winter: I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Council for its decision to convene this important briefing on the Special Court for Sierra Leone. My presence before the Council today as President of the Special Court comes at a critical juncture in the final stages of the Court's mandate. Therefore, allow me to be direct and straightforward as I first provide a brief update on the status of our legal proceedings before discussing the Court's achievements and its impact on the citizens of Sierra Leone, as well as its residual issues and remaining challenges.

Over the past six years, the Prosecution has issued and the Chambers have confirmed indictments against 13 persons. Eleven individuals were arrested and transferred to the Special Court. Two died while in custody, one was killed in Liberia prior to being apprehended, and the whereabouts of another remain unknown. To date, we have concluded proceedings against eight of the remaining nine indictees in first instance.

The Special Court combined its proceedings into four main cases. Three of the trials took place in Freetown, against the leaders of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The fourth trial — the prosecution of Charles Taylor, ex-President of the Republic of Liberia — is now being held in The Hague for security reasons.

The Special Court completed all three trials in Freetown, including the appeals proceedings in the CDF and AFRC cases. Those cases resulted in the conviction and sentencing of all five individuals. Currently, the Appeals Chamber is adjudicating the appeals in the RUF case, and it will deliver its judgement in October of this year. Upon delivery of the RUF appeals judgement, the Special Court will have completed all of the judicial proceedings conducted in Freetown. In our final trial, the Taylor trial, the prosecution closed its case in February this year, and the defence started the presentation of its evidence this week. As Council members may have seen on the news, Charles Taylor is currently on the witness stand, testifying in his own defence.

According to the updated completion strategy, the Special Court predicts that the trial judgement will be delivered in the Taylor case in July 2010 and the sentencing judgement, if necessary, one month later. We project that in February 2011, upon delivery of the appeals judgement in the Taylor case, we will have completed all of the Special Court's judicial activities.

It is not easy to fully predict the duration of trials. Judges sitting in a court of law have control over a court's proceedings but cannot violate the rights of the parties to be heard. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the Appeals Chamber has consistently adhered to the allocated time frame set out in the completion strategy. I am rather proud to mention that the Appeals Chamber

at the Special Court has never taken longer than five months to conclude any appeal. As such, let me reassure the Council of the Special Court's continued commitment to achieving the aforementioned milestones in a timely and thorough fashion.

For those reasons in particular, the Special Court is considered to be an exemplary model of international justice. Since its inception, it has achieved many firsts and set many precedents in the development of international criminal law. It handed down the first decision on the non-applicability of national amnesty for international prosecution. It first adjudicated the limitations of immunity of a head of State vis-à-vis an international criminal court, and it is the first court in history to establish as crimes against humanity the forcible recruitment and use of child soldiers, attacks against United Nations peacekeepers and the use of forced marriages, and to convict those responsible accordingly.

However, the Special Court's impact on Sierra Leone extends well beyond the findings in its cases. Through specific and sustained efforts, the Special Court has transferred expertise to Siena Leoneans via a number of programmes, including capacity-building and training on police investigations, case management, courtroom interpretation, archiving, witness protection and detention standards. Further, the passage into law of three gender bills by the Sierra Leone Parliament is a direct consequence of the Court's work on gender issues. All three laws will greatly improve the lives of women in Sierra Leone.

The Court's Outreach Section, known as its crown jewel, has made our legal proceedings a part of Sierra Leone's national discourse and heritage. Over the years, the Court has conducted over 10,000 events, including town hall meetings, radio programmes and training sessions at schools, villages and cities across Sierra Leone and throughout Liberia and Guinea, as well.

Additionally, the Special Court is assisting the Government of Siena Leone, wherever possible, in its efforts to ensure the sustainability of the Court site beyond the lifespan of the Court. Several potential uses of the site identified by the Government include, but are not limited to, a regional training centre for the rule of law and a memorial component for commemorating the victims of the war.

Though much has been accomplished, much still needs to be achieved. To maintain international standards and successfully fulfil its original mandate, the Special Court is still bound by a number of legal obligations that will not terminate after the completion of trials and appeals. Together with its Management Committee, the Special Court has thus worked to determine a suitable arrangement to provide for these obligations, known as residual issues. A small successor body, whose structure will be kept to a bare minimum, will likely need to be established to manage and perform such residual functions, including the enforcement of sentences, maintenance of the Special Court's archives, witness protection and assistance, and the possible trial or transfer of the case of the one indictee at large.

Although a stand-alone residual mechanism will have to be created in the short term, in the long term sharing an administrative stage with another institution should be considered, particularly as many of the residual functions that will be performed by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia are similar to those of the Special Court. That would help to ensure the sustainability of the successor body in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Assistance given by the Security Council will continue to be as important in the future as it has been in the past. Much of the Special Court's aforementioned success emerged from the generous support of the Security Council on numerous occasions. I would like to express particular gratitude for the Council's adoption of resolution 1688 (2006), which requested all States to cooperate in the transfer of Charles Taylor to the Netherlands; the adoption of resolution 1626 (2005), which extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to include the protection of the Court's premises by a contingent of Mongolian troops; and the adoption of resolution 1750 (2007), mandating UNMIL to provide support to the Special Court for activities conducted in Liberia with the consent of the Liberian Government. Thus, in order to successfully complete its mandate in the coming months, the Special Court continues to rely on the indispensable support of the Security Council and all Member States. Today more than ever before, this request is urgent.

As members of the Council know, the Special Court is currently funded by voluntary contributions

from interested States. Despite efforts by the Court to contain costs and operate as efficiently as possible, the financial situation of the Court is most serious. In March 2009, the Secretary-General wrote to Member States to inform them of his grave concern regarding our funding situation and to seek their urgent support. Based on current available funds, the Court will experience a funding shortfall by the first week of August 2009 — a very short time from now. This shortfall poses the real possibility of disrupting our work, which would have disastrous consequences for the Council's extensive peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone and Liberia. A disruption in the proceedings would send the wrong message to the international community, jeopardizing the fight against impunity and potentially calling into question our collective commitment to international justice. In total, the Court will need approximately $30 million to complete its mandate successfully.

I would also like to recall that, in the words of resolution 1829 (2008), the Security Council recognizes that "further arrangements will be necessary to address residual matters". Because the necessary residual mechanisms must last as long as victims and witnesses need protection and until every sentence has been served, it will be a great and ongoing challenge to maintain the mechanism in the long term based purely on voluntary contributions. It is also important to note that fundraising has proven to be a time-consuming and costly endeavour.

There is much work to be accomplished over the next 18 months. Most importantly, we must conclude the final case in Sierra Leone, after which the facilities and operations in Freetown will be kept at a minimum provided that we can transfer in a timely manner the convicted persons to an enforcing State. To accomplish that endeavour and assist the host country, the establishment of a trust fund could be envisaged.

We must complete the trial of Charles Taylor in The Hague, which is so critical to preserving the fragile peace and stability in West Africa. Without the adequate funds, it will be very difficult to retain competent Court personnel who might depart for better-paid and longer-lasting employment, to the detriment of an efficiently run Trial Chamber. Lastly, the Special Court must set up a residual mechanism — the first of its kind — that will be of use to other international courts when they reach their final stages, thus saving significant costs to the international community.

The Special Court is an institution that the Council can be proud of. The Court's groundbreaking jurisprudence and its impact on the justice system in Sierra Leone are exemplary achievements. I am as confident as I am hopeful that the international community will allow our effective and competent Court to finalize its mandate successfully. To show that it is not only me who believes that the Special Court does effective and competent work, allow me to read out a letter that I received a few days ago:

> "In New York
>
> "Dear Gentlemen and Ladies:
>
> "Please accept this small donation to help with the work of your court. It is vitally important you keep up your important work. Thank you for your efforts and please continue to do your work. Thank you.
>
> "Enclosed is $20 to help. I know it is a small amount, but maybe if the world Governments do not fund your work, individuals will."

Is that not a nice letter? I will keep it with me, bring it to Sierra Leone, together with the $20-bill, and put it in a frame to show our people that they are not alone.

Let me conclude by once again expressing my gratitude to the Security Council and Member States for the support that the Special Court has received from the United Nations since its inception. On behalf of the judges and staff of the Special Court, I also wish to convey our utmost gratitude to the Management Committee of the Special Court, as well as to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs for the invaluable help and advice it has imparted to the Special Court at all times.

The President: I thank Justice Winter for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Prosecutor Stephen Rapp.

Mr. Rapp: In beginning my presentation, let me echo the sentiments of President Winter and thank the Council for its decision to convene this briefing on the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

In resolution 1315 (2000), the Security Council responded to a request that came from the Government

of Sierra Leone, and it also recognized the serious crimes committed against the people of that country, in requesting the Secretary-General to negotiate an agreement to create an independent special court. It was to be a credible system of justice and accountability that could hold individuals criminally responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law and, in doing so, contribute to the restoration and maintenance of peace.

For the victims — the thousands who had been mutilated, the tens of thousands who had been murdered, indeed the hundreds of thousands who had been subjected to sexual violence — the Special Court offers justice by holding to account those alleged to bear the greatest responsibility for these crimes.

As President Winter has reported, the Special Court has completed three multiple-accused trials in Freetown. Two of those cases have now been finalized on appeal, and the appeals proceeding in the third should be concluded by October 2009. Members will recall that the last time that the principals of the Special Court addressed this body, in June 2007 (see S/PV.5690), we reported that the fourth trial had just commenced with the presentation of the prosecution's opening statement. That was the trial of Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia.

Since then, some 91 individuals, almost all of them from Sierra Leone or Liberia, have travelled to and from The Hague to present their testimony. They were able personally to bear witness in this historic proceeding because their presence in the Netherlands was made possible by the Security Council in resolution 1688 (2006), which facilitated the conduct of this trial away from the seat of the Special Court in the interests of regional security.

Since the witnesses began their testimonies in January 2008, the Taylor trial has proceeded smoothly, with a high level of transparency, efficiency and fairness. This very week saw the commencement of the defence case, with the presentation of its opening statement, followed by the accused himself, former President Taylor, taking the stand to begin his testimony. Thereafter, other defence witnesses will testify, and the accused will be assured of his right to fully contest the indictment against him. We feel confident that the trial will be conducted and managed to allow for the entry of judgement by mid-2010 and for finalization on appeal by very early in 2011.

As President Winter has mentioned, the proceedings in Freetown have resulted in historic developments in international humanitarian law. Most well known was the groundbreaking precedent recognizing that the use of child soldiers — persons under the age of 15 — in armed conflict was an international crime, followed thereafter by the convictions — the first in history — of five individual defendants for that offence. The Special Court also pronounced the first-ever conviction on the charge of acts of terrorism in a non-international armed conflict. The recent trial judgement in the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) case included the first convictions in history for the specific crime of attacks on United Nations peacekeepers. This was an offence that was defined in the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. This precedent sends a clear message in the conflict zones around the world, wherever the United Nations, through its Member States, has provided and today is providing forces to maintain peace and security.

The Special Court continues to make a significant contribution to bringing justice to victims of sexual violence and gender-based crimes, of which there were so many during the Sierra Leone civil war. The Court pronounced the first-ever convictions on the charge of sexual slavery, both as a war crime and as a crime against humanity. It further recognized forced marriage as an inhumane act constituting a crime against humanity and rendered in February the first convictions on that charge.

In pursuing this wider range of offences, and by alleging that they were among the acts of terrorism, the prosecution was able to present a case showing that these acts of sexual violence were committed as part of a strategy for dominating and instilling fear in the civilian population. In the recent RUF trial judgement, again for the first time, leaders of an armed movement were held responsible for these offences, whatever their physical distance from the actual acts, because the commission of these crimes was part of a common scheme or plan.

The Court's work has helped implement Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), which recognized that the protection of women and girls in armed conflict can significantly contribute to international peace and security, called on parties to protect them from gender-based violence and

emphasized the shared responsibility to end impunity and prosecute those responsible for such crimes.

All of these accomplishments have been achieved by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, an institution that represents a partnership between an African nation and the international community. It is a court in which 60 per cent of the workforce is Sierra Leonean, and in which Sierra Leone citizens hold senior positions in every organ, including my own Deputy Prosecutor, Joseph Kamara. It is also the court that has placed the highest priority on outreach, in providing accurate information about its proceedings to the population throughout Sierra Leone, and, for the Taylor case, to Liberia as well. For as important as it is to do justice, for all those that the Court intends to serve it is also important that justice be seen to be done.

As the Special Court concludes its proceedings, we must address the need for a mechanism to deal with residual issues. President Winter mentioned several of these issues. Let me focus on one that falls directly within the responsibility of the prosecution.

This concerns the case of the Court's one indictee-at-large, Johnny Paul Koroma. Witnesses in the Taylor trial have testified to hearing reports that Koroma was killed in Liberia not long after he was indicted. However, despite significant efforts, the prosecution has not been able to find and identify his remains, and rumours persist of his whereabouts in the subregion. Mr. Koroma was head of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and served as the effective chief of State during the nine months in 1997 and 1998 that an AFRC-RUF junta ruled in Sierra Leone. Three other leaders of the AFRC have been tried and convicted. It would be unacceptable for the country and for international justice were Koroma to surface after the closure of the Court and never have to answer for his alleged crimes in a court of law. Therefore, the prosecution has been in discussions with authorities in Sierra Leone and two other States and will take steps before the Special Court concludes its active proceedings to ensure that Koroma can be prosecuted thereafter within a national system.

President Winter spoke of the need for State cooperation in the enforcement of our sentences. It is well accepted that the prison sentences of the Court's convicted persons must be served in facilities that are secure and that meet international standards. The Government of Sierra Leone expressed its wish that these sentences be served outside of Sierra Leone. We in the prosecution share that view because of our concern for the safety and the security of the witnesses and also for the personnel of the Special Court. It is therefore necessary to reach agreements with States for enforcement of sentences that provide that the enforcing State will cover the cost of caring for the prisoners, or to provide funding through the residual mechanism to meet these expenses on an ongoing basis.

Those are but two of the challenges that must be met during the post-closure period. The Court and its Management Committee are working on proposals for a very small residual mechanism that may provide a model for the other international courts that will close after us. However, even if it is very small, we will still need a secure source of funding that will remain in place until all prisoners have served their sentences and all the challenges have been managed.

While the future funding of the residual mechanism must be addressed, the Court's immediate financial situation may now be fairly characterized as an impending crisis. Even if all pledged donations from donors for this year come in early — and that is as yet uncertain, as the President told the Council — at the moment, the funds on hand will be exhausted in August. If those contributions come in early this year, our funds will nonetheless run dry early next year, before the next round of donations. The Special Court will not have the resources necessary to complete its work.

We are deeply appreciative of the support of Member States that have provided the voluntary contributions that have permitted the Special Court to reach this point, when its mission is so close to completion. We all wish to express our profound gratitude to the Secretary-General for his letters to Member States on our behalf, most recently on 16 March 2009. At this point, while we recognize that the Security Council is not directly involved in financial issues, we would respectfully request the Council and its President to consider urging Member States to pledge and to contribute so that the Special Court can conclude the RUF appeal in Freetown and the historic proceedings in the Charles Taylor case in The Hague.

The commission of serious crimes against the civilian population of Sierra Leone motivated the

creation of the Special Court. We ask for the cooperation and support necessary to complete its mandate, so that justice can be achieved for the victims of those crimes. As envisioned by the Security Council in resolution 1315 (2000), that will contribute to reconciliation and respect for the rule of law. It will also send a powerful message that the international community strongly supports institutions established to hold to account those responsible for such atrocities, and by doing so deter their perpetration in the future, thus saving others from the violence, the injury, and the death visited on the innocent people of Sierra Leone.

The President: I thank Prosecutor Rapp for his briefing. I shall now give the floor to members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Quarrey (United Kingdom): I should like to start by thanking the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their very informative briefings this morning and for all the work they are doing to help to bring justice to the people of Sierra Leone. We would also like to welcome to the Council today the representative of Sierra Leone.

Since we last considered the work of the Special Court, Sierra Leone has made significant progress. Its elections in September 2007 were another milestone for the country. They demonstrated that, in spite of a decade of conflict, Sierra Leone is beginning to consolidate its peace and rebuild its democratic institutions and tradition. Part of that consolidation has been the re-establishment of the rule of law and the repudiation of impunity. The Special Court has played a central role in that process.

The United Kingdom is a strong supporter of the Special Court, as we are a friend to Sierra Leone. We have demonstrated that support through practical and concrete actions. We are one of the largest financial contributors to the Special Court, having contributed some $32 million to the Court's operations since 2002. We are also an active member of the Special Court's Management Committee here in New York.

The Court is now entering the final stages of its work. It is significant that the Security Council is considering the work of the Court in the same week that the defence case begins in the trial of Charles Taylor. He is the first African head of State to be tried for war crimes. He is also the last of the indictees to be brought before the Court. We are confident that Mr. Taylor will receive a fair trial in accordance with internationally recognized human rights norms. We stand ready to imprison Mr. Taylor in the United Kingdom if he is convicted.

It is because the Court is entering the final stages of its work that, as President Winter has said, we must urgently address the Court's legacy and residual issues. Like the Court itself, the proposed residual mechanism is slimmed down and cost-efficient. Supporters of the Court will need to consider how that mechanism is funded, how it may fit with the follow-on mechanisms of other international tribunals and how it offers the international community both the best service, in terms of international jurisprudence, and value for money. It is critical to the integrity of the justice process to date that residual functions be sustained effectively.

It remains important that, even in these final stages, the Court continues to work to fulfil its mandate as expeditiously as possible and, where possible, deliver further efficiencies and budgetary savings. Equally, it is essential that the international community ensure that the Special Court has the resources it needs to complete its valuable work. We have heard today of the impending crisis in the Court's finances. We would strongly urge all Member States to make the further financial contributions needed to fund the final chapter of the Court's operations. We are grateful to those States that are working with the Court on the issue of enforcement of sentences and witness relocation.

Finally, we should like to pledge our support for the continued work of the Court, which has played an indispensible role in helping to bring sustainable peace to Sierra Leone. We pay tribute to its President, Prosecutor, judges and all its staff.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): I would like to welcome Justice Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Prosecutor Stephen Rapp, as well as to thank them for their comprehensive briefings. I also wish to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this very timely meeting, which is taking place at a time when defence hearings are under way in The Hague in the case of former Liberian President Charles Taylor. That case represents one of the most significant undertakings of the Court. It is therefore of great use for the Council to be kept abreast of the work of the Special Court.

Sierra Leone went through perilous times in the 1990s. It is now a great pleasure to see that war-torn

country emerge from that difficult period with promising signs of peace and stability. For that, we commend the people and political leadership of the country for showing resilience and taking bold steps towards unity and reconciliation. That said, we also highly appreciate the important role of the Special Court in its efforts to end impunity and advance the rule of law in Sierra Leone.

Indeed, since its establishment the Special Court has done impressive work to that end, contributing not only to national peace and harmony but also to regional stability and understanding. In that regard, we agree with President Winter that the Special Court for Sierra Leone is an exemplary model of international justice. As she pointed out, the firsts and precedents established by the Court in the development of international criminal law are all worth emphasizing.

In more specific terms, I would also like to congratulate the Special Court on its significant achievements in 2008, such as the completion of two out of four trials, namely, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and the Civil Defence Forces cases. We hope that the Revolutionary United Front case will also be concluded soon through the appeals judgement. Given the significance of the case related to former Liberian President Charles Taylor, we think that the continuation of the valuable work of the Special Court may now be even more important than ever, for the trial of Charles Taylor, which has attracted worldwide attention, will be a turning point in international efforts to end impunity.

In fact, a fair and effective trial process in each of the four cases dealt with by the Special Court will send a clear message to everyone involved and will, we hope, discourage war crimes and crimes against humanity all around the world. After all, those who perpetrate such crimes must know that they will be held responsible by the international community for their acts.

We believe that the Special Court for Sierra Leone will successfully complete its work within the time frame described by the President and the Prosecutor of the Court. For us, the successful completion of the work is more important that merely meeting deadlines. We therefore think that we should be flexible in allowing the time needed by the Court, taking into account the requirements of the tasks at hand. Moreover, the effective completion of the Court's work also depends upon the availability of the necessary resources. In this regard, the continued contribution of the international community should also be seen as an essential element of the completion strategy. For its part, Turkey has consistently made voluntary financial contributions to the Special Court since its inception.

Finally, the Special Court for Sierra Leone will constitute yet another first by being the first international court to set up a residual mechanism. This is also worth noting when we speak about the completion strategy. We believe that this residual mechanism can constitute an example that could be emulated by other international courts as well.

In conclusion, we thank the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their most valuable work and wish them every success in their future deliberations.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Allow me to begin by welcoming and extending our gratitude to the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for sharing with the Security Council the latest information on the considerable progress made in implementing the Court's mandate. We appreciate their personal commitment in carrying out this mandate.

The Court's establishment, which broke new ground in international criminal justice, and its jurisprudence and accomplishments represent a strong contribution to the global fight against impunity and the fostering of the rule of law. It continues to demonstrate that peace and justice are not contradictory terms.

Earlier this year, a significant milestone was achieved with the conviction of Revolutionary United Front leaders for atrocities committed during the civil war in Sierra Leone, sending a strong message against impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Croatia continues to closely follow the trial of Charles Taylor in The Hague. We appreciate the extensive outreach efforts undertaken by the Court. Together with its capacity-building projects, these efforts represent an excellent way of not only spreading awareness and understanding of the Court's mission, but also preserving its legacy and thus contributing to lasting peace and stability in Sierra Leone and in the region of West Africa.

As the operations in Freetown are nearing conclusion, we understand that certain challenges remain. Funding remains a critical issue for the Court in this phase. One of the pressing outstanding questions is securing the appropriate arrangements and financing for the enforcement of sentences, and we welcome the steps taken by the Court and its Management Committee to address these issues.

We also understand that continuing international support is indispensable to achieving the orderly completion of the Court's work, which in turn will be the best guarantee for securing its lasting legacy. As an ad hoc institution, the Special Court will once again break new ground in the field of international justice by having to provide solutions to support its residual functions while respecting international standards in ensuring the ongoing protection of the human rights of individuals affected by its work. We support the Court's efforts to that end.

Croatia has highly appreciated the opportunity to consult with the representatives of the Special Court in the context of the ongoing discussions within the Security Council's informal working group on international tribunals, which is currently examining options for setting up residual mechanisms for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Croatia hopes to see the continuation of this exchange, which could certainly be of mutual interest and benefit for both sides.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Justice Renate Winter, and its Prosecutor, Mr. Stephen Rapp, for their very informative briefings. Allow me to add that we are honoured that an Austrian national, who previously distinguished herself as an international judge in Kosovo, is presiding over that important Court.

Austria has a long-standing commitment to support and contribute to efforts to strengthen the rule of law, promote human rights and end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes. My delegation thus highly commends the efforts of the Special Court to bring to justice those responsible for the crimes committed during the armed conflict in Sierra Leone since 1991, including former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who was arrested in the spring of 2006.

The Court's work is vital to ensuring accountability and promoting reconciliation, peacebuilding and the re-establishment of the rule of law in Sierra Leone. The Special Court plays a pioneering role in combating impunity and strengthening the rule of law at both the international and the national levels. As the President and the Prosecutor have already pointed out, judgements delivered by the Court have greatly contributed to the development of international criminal law and international humanitarian law, in particular regarding the recruitment and use of child soldiers and forced marriages. As the Prosecutor has said, it is important to note that lawyers from Sierra Leone have played a very important part in these developments.

At the national level, the activities of the Court, including through its capacity-building and outreach programmes, have assisted in strengthening the justice system in Sierra Leone. Further efforts in this field are, however, needed.

As was highlighted by President Winter today, the Special Court also faces a number of important challenges. First and foremost, the very serious financial situation of the Court is of great concern. As is well known, the Special Court is funded exclusively by voluntary contributions, and currently available funds, as has been said, will be exhausted by early August. We join in President Winter's urgent call upon all States to help alleviate the dire financial situation of the Court. The Austrian Government has made repeated voluntary contributions to the Court, most recently following the appeal of the Secretary-General in March.

Secondly, the Court is doing its utmost to accomplish its completion strategy and finish its work, including the Taylor case, at the earliest date, while maintaining all standards of fair trial and due process, as well as undertaking effective outreach among the local population in the region. Austria fully supports these efforts and appreciates the projections that all of the Court's judicial activities will be complete by February 2011.

Finally, we must bear in mind that the work of the Special Court will not be finished at the time of the completion of the last case, but that a number of residual functions, as has been said, will have to be performed even after its closure. As chair of the Security Council's informal working group on

international tribunals, which deals with the residual issues of the ad hoc Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, Austria follows very closely the ongoing discussions in the Special Court and its Management Committee on setting up a small successor body to manage and perform such residual functions, including the enforcement of sentences, the maintenance of archives, witness protection and the possible trial or transfer of the case of Johnny Koroma, who is still at large.

In this context, Austria also supports the proposal to establish a trust fund to cover the costs for the upkeep of prisoners of the Special Court so that they can serve their sentences in appropriate enforcing States. Despite a number of legal and practical differences between the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the two ad hoc Tribunals, in essence we are facing the same challenge — closing down an international criminal tribunal, which, as some have said, seems to be a much more complex task than setting up a new tribunal. We stand ready to further intensify the informal dialogue and exchange of views between the members of the working group and the Special Court and its Management Committee.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the President, judges, Prosecutor, Registrar and all of the staff of the Special Court for their tireless efforts in the name of international justice, and to reaffirm Austria's continued cooperation and support for the Special Court.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): I would like to welcome Justice Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Stephen Rapp, Prosecutor of the Court, to the Council today and thank them for their briefings. My Government would like to congratulate them on the significant achievements of the Court to date. I would also like to welcome the representative of Sierra Leone to the Council.

Today's briefings come at a critical juncture as the Court completes the final phase of its mandate. The successful completion of the Court's work and the establishment of a viable residual mechanism remain priorities for the United States.

The United States was instrumental in the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and has been its largest financial supporter. Since the Court's inception in 2002, the United States has contributed more than $60 million to it. We welcome the broad financial support that the Court has enjoyed in the past, and we encourage all Member States to support the Court to help ensure that justice is served, impunity is not tolerated and Sierra Leone and the region can sustain accountability, peace and security in the years to come. The Court must be supported if it is to conclude its mandate.

The Government of Sierra Leone has been a strong and committed partner in the work of the Court. The Court has been instrumental in contributing to peace and stability in Sierra Leone through the creation of a transparent and independent judicial process. When the Court closes, it will effectively end a chapter in Sierra Leonean history.

The United States fully supports the Court's efforts to transfer its institutional knowledge to Sierra Leone authorities. We believe it important to the country's ongoing democratic development that all lessons of the past be fully absorbed, and the Special Court has much to offer in that regard. After the Court's mandate is completed, the international community will, of course, continue its efforts to support peacebuilding and long-term social and economic development in Sierra Leone.

The United States has appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Special Court's Management Committee. We commend the work of the Canadian Chair. We also commend the work of the Court's staff in evaluating options for a residual mechanism, and we applaud their efforts to reduce cost and improve efficiency in the Court's operations. The United States remains committed to an efficient, cost-effective and successful residual mechanism.

Finally, we again thank the President, the Prosecutor, the Acting Registrar and their staff for their dedication and commitment. The Court has broken new ground in the field of international criminal law, including the recognition of the use of child soldiers as an international crime and sexual slavery as a war crime and crime against humanity. And it has built a powerful legacy by fighting against impunity and working to bring justice to the people of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): My delegation wishes to sincerely thank Justice Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Prosecutor Stephen Rapp for their briefings to the Council on the activities of the Special Court, in particular the implementation of its completion

strategy. The Vietnamese delegation also welcomes the presence of the representative of Sierra Leone at our meeting today.

Viet Nam has been following closely and with satisfaction the continued achievements of the Government of Sierra Leone in the implementation of its agenda for peace consolidation and economic recovery. Those achievements were recognized in the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (S/2008/281). In that context, the establishment and operation of the Special Court for Sierra Leone have proved to be positive contributions to the development of peace and security in the country.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend the Special Court for its completed and ongoing trials, as well as for the important precedents that the Court has set in international criminal law. We are following with keen interest the formulation and implementation of the Special Court's completion strategy, including the establishment of a residual mechanism. These will serve as helpful guidelines to the members of the Security Council in their consideration of similar issues relating to the two other international criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Mr. Shcherbak (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the delegation of the Russian Federation, I should like to thank the leadership of the Special Court for today's briefings and to note the considerable contributions made by that institution to the fight against impunity. We also welcome the presence of the representative of Sierra Leone at today's meeting.

Since its establishment, the Special Court has carried out serious work aimed at prosecuting individuals who have committed serious violations of international humanitarian law. It has accumulated valuable and, in certain respects, unique experience in the area of international criminal justice. The Court has demonstrated its effectiveness despite the financial difficulties facing it.

Of equal importance are the Special Court's contributions to strengthening stability in Sierra Leone and throughout the subregion. Critical tasks in that regard include assisting the country's State institutions, particularly in the area of security and justice, and resolving problems related to the reintegration of ex-combatants into peaceful life.

The Special Court's activities have shown that justice and reconciliation in post-conflict societies need not conflict with each other, but rather that they can be complementary elements in the peacebuilding process. We welcome the momentum in the Court's proceedings as we approach the deadline for the completion of its work. Two major cases have been fully considered thus far, which will make it possible to focus on the remaining trials. The most complex and politically sensitive of these is generally recognized to be the trial of Mr. Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia. We are closely following the developments in that regard.

We note the progress made by the Special Court regarding its future residual mechanism, which we believe will be a compact and cost-effective temporary structure.

In conclusion, we note the Special Court's considerable achievements in the area of public outreach regarding its activities, as well as its efforts to build the judicial and law-enforcement capacities of Sierra Leone. In our view, the projects undertaken by the Special Court in that area, if successfully implemented, will become an important part of the Special Court's future legacy.

Mr. Koudougou (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank Justice Renate Winter and Mr. Stephen Rapp, President and Prosecutor, respectively, of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, for the very useful information that they have shared with us on the Court's judicial activities and its completion strategy. We also welcome the presence among us of the representative of Sierra Leone.

Established to shed light on all crimes, atrocities and other human rights violations and thus to combat impunity in a country ravaged by several years of civil war, the Special Court has succeeded in integrating itself into the Sierra Leonean institutional landscape and in making a major contribution to the reconciliation and reconstruction process and to the establishment of a lasting peace in that country. That is why, like previous speakers, I should like to congratulate the Court on the results achieved, despite the difficulties of every kind — particularly financial — that it has had to face. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Government and the people of Sierra

Leone for their cooperation with the Court, without which those results would never have been achieved. We welcome the cooperation shown by the States of West Africa, and we are also grateful to those countries and institutions that have provided the financial support essential to the Court's functioning.

On the political front, we note that Sierra Leone has made notable progress thanks to the firm resolve of its people; to subregional support, in particular from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); and to significant support from the entire international community, all of which have contributed to Sierra Leone's admission to the Peacebuilding Commission.

As a State member of ECOWAS, Burkina Faso believes in the possibility of lasting stability in that country. We call on the international community to continue to support the Special Court, in particular in implementing its completion strategy.

Mr. Sumi (Japan): I, too, wish to thank President Renate Winter and Prosecutor Stephen Rapp of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their informative briefings. Their briefings to the Security Council are very timely in view of the commencement on 13 July of the defence case in the trial of Charles Taylor and of the progress made in the other cases since the most recent briefings in 2007. I also welcome the presence of the representative of Sierra Leone in the Council today.

Japan is strongly committed to the realization of justice and the rule of law at both the national and the international levels, and believes that international and hybrid criminal tribunals have played an important role to that end. We have therefore been making the utmost effort to contribute to the activities of the various criminal tribunals.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm Japan's strong support for the activities of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. The Special Court was established in a country where serious crimes had been committed. Although the case of former President Charles Taylor had to be conducted in The Hague for several reasons, the closeness of the Special Court to the people of Sierra Leone and its effective outreach programmes have contributed to gaining the understanding and acceptance of the affected people. This unique feature of the Special Court is noteworthy and provides important lessons for future trials for serious crimes committed in conflict situations.

Japan highly appreciates the efforts made by the judges, prosecutors and registrars, who have contributed greatly to the significant progress made so far. We also appreciate the tireless efforts of the Management Committee chaired by Canada, which has been addressing a number of difficulties faced by the Special Court. Japan strongly hopes that, through the continued efforts of the Special Court and the contributing States, the Court will be able to overcome the current financial challenges and successfully complete its mandate.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone has played a pioneering role in addressing unprecedented legal and practical challenges. The issue regarding the residual functions of the ad hoc tribunals after the completion of trials is another unprecedented challenge that the Special Court must address before the other international tribunals. Although there are important differences between the Special Court and the other tribunals, Japan hopes that the experience of the Special Court for Sierra Leone will offer useful insights on that issue for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and other tribunals.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico, like other members, thanks President Renate Winter and Prosecutor Stephen Rapp of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for the detailed information they have provided to the Council on the work of the Special Court, its successes and the challenges ahead. We also welcome the presence of the representative of Sierra Leone in the Council.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone is a pioneer and exemplar in the field of international criminal justice. It has made significant contributions to the development of international jurisprudence and made decisions of great importance to the international community. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the most important work of the Court has been the extremely positive effect its work has had on the people in Sierra Leone, first because it showed the population that the worst violations of international humanitarian law of which they were victims throughout most of the previous decade will not go unpunished. It also reconfirmed the theory that, if

peace and reconciliation are to be achieved, they must be accompanied by justice.

Secondly, the Court has done essential work at the national level and, we hope, beyond its borders to build a culture of dissuasion and prevention of the most serious crimes, and to strengthen institutional capacity in Sierra Leone based on a criminal justice system in conformity with international standards. In brief, the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone has made a decisive contribution to the transition to peace and the rule of law and has been critical to ongoing efforts to ensure national reconciliation and reconstruction.

My delegation listened closely to the information provided to the Council on the completion of all the Court's legal proceedings in Freetown by October. We are also following the trial of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, in The Hague. On the latter point, of particular importance is the enormous contribution, for which we are extremely grateful, made by the Special Court for Sierra Leone to the development of international justice by setting limits on the immunity of a head of State before an international court.

President Winter also gave us estimates contained in the completion strategy recently adopted by the Management Committee of the Special Court for the conclusion of the Court's legal activities. She also identified some of the challenges the Court will face in carrying out its residual functions, such as the management of archives, the protection of witnesses, and the execution of sentences, among others. Without a doubt, those functions and tasks must be supported by the international community.

At the same time, my delegation has taken due note of the urgent needs facing the Special Court, in particular with regard to financing its activities. Mexico has supported the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, in particular in the light of its results. In most recent years, my country has made a modest contribution to financing the work of the Court. That was the result of an enormous effort on the part of the Mexican Government, but it was done in the conviction that it is important to combat impunity with regard to the commission of the most serious crimes against humanity.

Once again, Mexico thanks President Winter and Prosecutor Rapp for their timely appearance before the Council and assures them that it will continue to follow developments in the work of the Court with great interest.

Ms. Chen Peijie (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to thank President Winter and Prosecutor Rapp of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for their briefings. We also welcome the presence at this meeting of the representative of Sierra Leone.

We have taken note of the fact that over the past two years the Special Court has continued to make progress in its work, including the finalization of two trials. That means that only two trials remain to be completed. We express our appreciation for that progress. As the trials and appeals approach completion, the goals set in the Special Court's completion strategy are coming into sight. We are pleased to note that the Special Court's judicial activities could conclude in early 2011. We look forward to that.

China has always supported the work of the Special Court. We anticipate that the Court will continue effectively its work on both trials and appeals, that it will successfully address legacy issues in an appropriate and effective manner and that it will achieve the goals set out in its completion strategy in an appropriate and timely way. We hope that countries in a position to do so will continue to support the Special Court in order to help it to overcome the difficulties it faces and assist it to effectively carry out its completion strategy.

Mr. Gouider (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I join previous speakers in expressing our appreciation to Justice Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and to Mr. Stephen Rapp, Prosecutor of the Special Court. I also welcome the presence among us of the representative of Sierra Leone.

We thank the Special Court for Sierra Leone for its endeavours, as described today by its President and its Prosecutor, whom we thank for their briefings and for the exceptional work they, the other judges and the Court staff have done. There is no doubt that history will record their role in enriching international criminal and humanitarian law in a number of important ways.

Like those given yesterday to the Security Council Committee on Sierra Leone, today's briefings outlined the Court's activities, which indicate that there has been palpable progress towards fulfilling the

completion strategy in keeping with the principles of due process, fairness and respect for the rights of indictees. We support measures adopted by the Court and its Management Committee, in particular those adopted so far this year. Such measures include amending the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, providing support to Court staff and updating the timeline for trials and appeals.

In the light of the briefings and the Secretary-General's letters, we believe that in spite of that progress it is important for States in a position to do so to take concrete measures to provide financial and human-resources support for the Court. That is a matter of urgency given the Court's current difficult financial situation.

We attach high value to the Court President's comments on the Court's relationship with the Sierra Leone judicial and legal system, and on its impact on that system. In discussing ad hoc courts, my country has always advocated building national judicial capacity. We reaffirm that today with a view to enabling national judicial bodies to continue the proceedings of all ad hoc courts when those courts have completed their work, with full commitment to the principles of due process and fair trials. That would guarantee respect for the principle of equality and would entrench the rule of law in the States concerned. It would also ensure State ownership of court archives, whose importance transcends the actual proceedings and involves the history of the States concerned and the process of national reconciliation. The situation has changed, and the national judiciaries of States in which such crimes have been committed and where evidence and witnesses are available are capable of professionally handling all unresolved issues, with the support and assistance of the international community.

Our concern that the Special Court for Sierra Leone complete its work in line with the completion strategy — a concern shared by the Court — places upon us the responsibility to enable the Court to decide as soon as possible on measures with respect to legacy issues, through a mechanism with defined tasks and resources.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I too wish to thank Ms. Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Mr. Stephen Rapp, Prosecutor of the Court, for their work. The gravity of the crimes perpetrated during the civil war called for a response commensurate with the violence. It was a matter of fighting impunity for those who committed those serious violations of international humanitarian law. That is why, since the Court's establishment in 2002, France has provided full political support for the activities of this criminal court established jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations.

In that respect the trial of Charles Taylor is a good example, because it is the first trial of a sitting head of State indicted by an international judicial body. His trial, which has just entered the defence phase, is being followed fervently not only in Sierra Leone but also, and especially, in Liberia. That illustrates the sometimes tragic interweaving of the history of those two countries and the fragility that persists, particularly in Liberia — a fragility that can be addressed only by Liberians themselves.

In that context, it is noteworthy that the United Nations has succeeded in adopting an approach with a regional orientation: in Sierra Leone, the Special Court is guarded by a contingent from the United Nations Mission in Liberia. That should encourage us to continue on that path, including the transformation of the United Nations presence in Sierra Leone into an integrated office, linked with the inclusive approach advocated within the Sierra Leone country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

From today's briefings, I understand that the Special Court for Sierra Leone will complete its work by 2011 at the latest. The Council should therefore express itself on the Court's completion strategy soon. In that regard, France hopes that the final strategy will be financially sustainable. The Sierra Leone court system should be closely associated with this and should play its full part in taking over residual functions; likewise, other countries could provide support so that those convicted by the Special Court can serve their sentences on the territory of those countries.

Mr. Guillermet (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by thanking Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Prosecutor Steven Rapp for their presence among us and for their briefings. This Council and the international community must be proud of the work of and the trail blazed by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The Special Court has been a bellwether. It was the first Court to be established with a shared model of responsibilities under an agreement between the United Nations and one of its Member States — Sierra Leone. Primarily, however, it was the first step taken by that country in its fight against impunity and accountability for serious crimes whose excessive cruelty shocked humankind.

As Justice Winter eloquently described, the Special Court for Sierra Leone has set precedents in many matters. Its jurisprudence was the first to develop the principle of non-applicability of amnesties in international prosecution and to establish limitations on the immunity of heads of State before an international criminal court, and it was the first to recognize the use of child soldiers as an international crime. Its invaluable legacy to international criminal justice and to international law deserves our acknowledgement and the praise of the international community.

Now, it is to be the first to end its judicial proceedings and to set up a residual mechanism that will remain once it has closed its doors. It will serve as an example for other courts. In that regard, we acknowledge the need to redouble the international community's efforts towards completion and to ensure justice for the victims.

The last trial, which has been pending since October, is that of the former President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, which is a clear example that the arm of the law reaches the highest political leaders, guaranteeing their right to a legitimate defence with internationally recognized procedural guarantees.

My delegation fully agrees that the conclusion of the trial of Charles Taylor is essential to making peace and stability sustainable in West Africa. The work of the Court proves to this Council that the contradiction between peace and justice that is sometimes posited is non-existent. The achievements of the Special Court for Sierra Leone show us that peace and justice are not incompatible, but that, on the contrary, justice is a decisive factor in ensuring sustainable and lasting peace.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Uganda.

I wish to join other members of the Council in welcoming Justice Renate Winter, President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Steven Rapp, Prosecutor of the Special Court, and I thank them for their briefings. I would also like to welcome the representative of Sierra Leone to this meeting.

Uganda appreciates the tremendous work carried out by the Court over the past six years. We attach great importance to the delivery of justice and to the fight against impunity for persons who bear the greatest responsibility for heinous crimes and violations of international humanitarian law. Uganda applauds the President, the Prosecutor and the Court on the completion strategy and on the timely manner in which they plan to complete the cases before the Court. To that extent, the Court can rightly claim the accolades it has received for being an exemplary model for international criminal justice.

We note, however, the challenge of the residual issues, which also concerns other interim tribunals. It is imperative that those issues be dealt with properly and ensure the smooth conclusion of the work of the tribunal. Uganda welcomes the capacity-building programmes and the training extended to the Sierra Leone police on investigations. In that way, the Court ensures that, even when its mandate is over, there will be continuity. There is no substitute for programmes such as victim and witness protection until the last sentence has been served.

We also welcome the outreach programmes, which ensure that the victims and the community are informed at every stage of the process. Only thus will they develop confidence that the system works, so that the healing process can start in full awareness that their abusers were punished for their transgressions. Justice must not only be done — it must also be seen to be done. The Special Court's outreach programmes reinforce that long-held legal adage.

We have noted with concern that, based on current available funds, the Court will experience a significant shortfall by the beginning of next month, which is likely to disrupt its work. It is important that the resources of the Court be predictable and consistent in order to enable the Court to concentrate on its judicial work and not to be encumbered by engaging in fund-raising activities. We therefore appeal to the international partners to urgently provide the requisite funds to the Court and thank the international partners for the exemplary efforts that they have made in mobilizing the resources that have supported the Courts to date.

Finally, I thank the President, the Prosecutor and the staff of the Special Court for their good work.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Davies (Sierra Leone): I want to thank the Council for organizing this meeting and the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone for briefing the Council on the considerable achievements that the Court has made.

As already highlighted by previous speakers, we have come a long way since the cessation of hostilities. We have been able to successfully organize three elections, the last of which brought a change of Government that saw the former opposition party leader, President Ernest Bai Koroma of the All People's Congress, form the present Government.

Sierra Leone has had a unique experience in its peacebuilding process. Being maybe the first country to introduce a hybrid Special Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in which perpetrators of atrocities and victims were able to expel the venom in them, whilst those responsible for serious atrocities were brought to justice in the Special Court.

I want to use this opportunity to thank the members of the international community who have consistently supported the Court, both financially and morally, and to appeal for their continued support with a view to concluding the Court's valuable work until it completes its deliberations early in 2011. We note with satisfaction that two trials have already been completed, with two remaining trials to be concluded.

Let me once again thank the Council for this meeting and President Winter and Prosecutor Rapp for their lucid presentations.

The President: I now give the floor to Justice Winter to respond to comments.

Ms. Winter: I do not wish to take up much of the Council's time. We have had a meeting of great importance, especially to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Once again, I would like to express my gratitude in the name of the Court and thank the Council for the continuous help that we have received so far. I urge the Council not to forget all those victims and witnesses who risked so much to come forward and help justice to achieve its cause. I urge the Council not to forget us now in our final efforts to complete our work. I thank all its members very much.

The President: I shall now give the floor to Mr. Rapp to respond to some of the comments that have been made.

Mr. Rapp: I wish to join President Winter in thanking the Council for convening this meeting and you, Sir, for presiding over it. I should also like to thank Council members for their presentations on behalf of member States, and particularly for their commendation of and praise for the work of the Special Court. I think I speak for the staff of the Special Court, and in particular the staff of the Office of the Prosecutor, in saying that those who are working in this endeavour will continue until our mandate is complete to work in such a way that we are worthy of the support that the Security Council has provided.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.